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REMARKS

1. Telephonic Interview of February 13.

An interview was held on February 13 between the undersigned and Examiner Shewareged. The interview focused on the Otani et al. reference, and in particular the question of whether the Otani et al. reference would make it obvious to select a colloidal silica that has a ratio of secondary primary diameter to primary particle diameter of from 1.5 to 3.0. The undersigned pointed out that (1) Otani cannot be read to teach a ratio as low as 0.5 (as suggested in the last office action) because that is physically impossible, (2) there is no other specific disclosure of a ratio of from 1.5 to 3.0, (3) Otani's examples show much higher ratios of 11, 12, 15, 17 and (4) experimental results in the current specification establish unexpected results even if Otani could be fairly said to establish a prima facie case of obviousness.

During the interview, the examiner suggested amending the main claims to specify that the pigment contains colloidal silica particles that are "peanut-shaped", as the experimental section of the application refers to particles having such a shape.

No agreement was reached during the interview.

2. The current amendment

The examiner is requested to enter the amendments presented here. Since the amendments were suggested by the examiner during the interview, it is believed that entering them will lead to immediate allowance of the case.

Support for "peanut-shaped" appears throughout the specification. The examiner's attention is drawn in particular to page 6 lines 1 to 10 of the English language specification, where the concept of "peanut-shaped" is described in some detail. "Peanut-shaped" refers to colloidal particles in which two or three primary particles are bonded together.

3. Regarding the Obviousness Rejections

As discussed in the interview, the claims have been amended to specify that the pigment contains "peanut-shaped" colloidal silica particles. None of the references in any way describes such colloidal silica particles, nor do they, singly or in any combination, suggest that such silica particles can be used, or that there would be any advantage to doing so.

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In addition, the data in the current specification shows that unexpectedly good results are obtained when the peanut-shaped colloidal particles are used, instead of spherical particles or clusters having other shapes. See, for example, Table 1 (page 28) of the specification, comparing in particular Examples 2 and 3 with Comparative Examples 2, 3 and 4. When the colloidal silica is spherical (ratio of secondary to primary particle size of 1.0), ink absorption and image clarity suffers. When the colloidal silica has a high ratio of secondary to primary particle size (Comp. Ex. 2 and 3), gloss and image clarity are poorer.

Nothing in the references suggests that the selection of a particular colloidal silica will affect gloss and image clarity in such a manner.

For this reason, the invention defined by the present claims is believed to be patentable over the references of record. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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